

Demands for Supplementary Grants.**PRESIDENT.**

The next item in the agenda is the Voting of Demands for grants.

Demand No. XI.—Registration.**Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.**

Sir, I rise to move for an additional grant of Rs. 100 under "XI—Registration—Refunds." The necessity for the grant I shall now explain.

Having regard to the actuals of the first 7 months of 1926, the allotment for the current year under "XI—Registration—Refunds" was fixed at Rs. 200, and this amount was sanctioned by this House. The Superintendent of Registration now states that several cases of excess collection of registration fees are observed during the inspection of the Registry Offices, and in repaying these excess collections to the parties, the major portion of the budget provision has been utilised so much so that only Rs. 12 remains unspent under the head. An additional allotment of Rs. 100 to cover the expenditure for the remaining portion of the year has become necessary, and it may be sanctioned. I may, however, draw the attention of this House to the fact that Government are no losers by sanctioning this grant, for refund is made only of that portion of the amount collected in excess over the legitimate dues of the Sirkar.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

Will the member be pleased to state how this excess collection was made by the Registrars?

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

They err on the safe side. If the collection is short, the officers responsible have to pay from their pockets.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

We are under the impression that there are specified rules for this collection.

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

But they collect it by mistake.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

Is this amount put down in the budget as excess collection?

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

The difference is found out only after the whole work is done.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

Is it put down in the budget as excess collection?

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

Do you mean under the "Receipts" head? There is no head for excess collection. It comes under "Revenue".

Mr. A. SANKARA PUDUVAL.

May I know whether an attempt is made to return the amount collected from the parties, i. e., when an extra amount is collected from a party, does the Government make an attempt to return the amount?

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

Yes. Then and there.

PRESIDENT.

The amounts include the deposits and copying fees, etc., and they are returned to the Vakils.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

After the expiry of the period specified in the notification, the amount not claimed will be credited to the Sirkar. Is it not?

Mr. A. SANKARA PUDUVAL.

But it is not open for the Vakils to claim them.

PRESIDENT.

They are handed over to the Vakils also.

Mr. A. SANKARA PUDUVAL.

The extra amounts and the copying fees collected from the parties may be kept in the Registrar's Office, and after duly informing the party, if within a definite period, they do not claim the amount, they may be credited to the State revenues.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

Why should they collect an extra amount?

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

They try their best to arrive at the correct figure.

Mr. A. SANKARA PUDUVAL.

Information should be directly supplied to the parties concerned regarding the refund of the excess amount collected. No amount should be credited to the Sirkar before that.

PRESIDENT.

The whole money is remitted into the Treasury, and when refunds are to be made, the amounts are to be drawn from the Treasury.

Mr. A. SANKARA PUDUVAL.

What I want to know is whether the parties concerned are given sufficient notice to claim the excess amount departmentally. It is really the party's money.

PRESIDENT.

Suppose Rs. 9 is collected for Rs. 8. One rupee should be returned. Is that your point? The amount should not be credited, unless an opportunity is given to the party to take it back.

Mr. A. SANKARA PUDUVAL.

Notice may be given to the party concerned to claim the excess amount levied. That is what ought to be done. What I want to know is whether that is not the practice. We are not legitimately entitled to the party's money. We must give them an opportunity to claim it.

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

We do not misappropriate the amount. We are bound to give it back.

Mr. A. SANKARA PUDUVAL.

That is what I want to know. I do not say the Government are misappropriating the amounts.

PRESIDENT.

Mr. Puduval's point is that the party is really entitled to a refund.

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

We give him notice as soon as the mistake is found out. We pay him then and there. When notice is given, he comes and claims the amount. We do not misappropriate it.

PRESIDENT.

It is not a question of misappropriation. These Registry Offices are inspected by the Superintendent once in six months, and if he finds out that excess amounts are collected, he sends a report to the Diwan that there is such and such a case of excess collection, and the Government sometimes agrees with his report, and sometimes his explanations are called for. Thus the Government directs that the refunds may be made, and in the case of deficit, the Government would have the necessary amount collected from the officer responsible.

Mr. A. SANKARA PUDUVAL.

The amount lapses only after an opportunity is given to the party to claim the refund, and if, within that period, he does not turn up, it might be credited to the Sirkar.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

Does this cover also copying fees or only excess collection? Is it impossible for the Government or the Registration Superintendent to arrange with the Registrars to have a uniformity of opinion with regard to the collection of fees?

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

We can only guard against such mistakes.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

Can the Government give an assurance to that effect?

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

No such guarantee can be given.

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

I know parties have to undergo considerable difficulty. A certain Registrar insists upon paying a certain fee, while another insists upon paying a greater amount. That is why I raised this point.

PRESIDENT.

We should have definite rules on the point. Is it your point that mistakes should not be committed?

Mr. N. PADMANABHA MENON.

I want to know whether any attempt has been made by the Head of the Department to see that mistakes that could be avoided are not repeated.

Mr. P. DAMODARA MENON.

An attempt is being made. Amounts are remitted then and there.

PRESIDENT.

When a mistake is pointed out, the refund is sanctioned; and it is given to the parties.

Mr. CHAKKO CHERUVATHUR.

I want to bring before this House the difficulty of parties. Some 3 or 4 years before, an excess amount of an anna or two annas might have been collected, and these people may be residing some four or five miles away. They are not likely to come and claim the amount. So it may be arranged that this excess amount is refunded at the time when they come to take the document. There is a receipt granted to the party for taking back the document.

PRESIDENT.

You do not understand the point. It is not known then and there. At the time of the handing of the document, the extra collection is not found out. It is months after.

Mr. CHAKKO CHERUVATHUR.

I say this one anna or two annas by way of excess collections in copying fees may be returned then and there.

PRESIDENT.

Wherever possible, the amount due will be refunded then and there.

The question for the grant of an additional allotment of Rs. 100 under Demand XI—Registration—Refunds was put to votes, and the allotment was made.

Demand XI—Medical.

DIWAN BAHADUR Dr. V. VERGHESE.

Sir, I beg to move for the grant of an additional allotment of Rs. 180 under the head "Hospitals"—Demand XI—Medical—and Rs. 140 under "Servants". The necessity for making this appeal for an additional grant is due to the opening of the new Ophthalmic Hospital and the new Operation Theatre. The new building for the Ophthalmic Hospital is a block of 2 walls with three or four small verandah rooms, one of which is for males and the other for females. It is situated at about a hundred yards away from the main building, and servants are necessary to look after the patients, to watch over them and to meet their necessities. Operation cases will arise. Several of the patients have no relations staying with them, and they cannot be looked after without servants. A nurse and an attendant for the Ophthalmic block is absolutely necessary.

PRESIDENT.

When we examined the matter in the Finance Committee, it was said that there was some mistake noticed in regard to the figures. What is the pay for the nurse?

DIWAN BAHADUR Dr. V. VERGHESE.

Rupees twenty.

PRESIDENT.

In calculating the amount, you have taken the pay for 9 months, i. e., from 1st Vrischigam. Strictly speaking, the Kar-kadagam pay should not be taken into account.

DIWAN BAHADUR Dr. V. VERGHESE.

Then it will be Rs. 160.

PRESIDENT.

You find a similar mistake under the other head also. So you have to reduce it by Rs. 40, i. e., 180 to be reduced to Rs. 160 and Rs. 140 to Rs. 120. The necessary correction might be made. The real figures will be Rs. 160 and 120, respectively.

Mr. C. A. KUNJUNNI RAJA.

These servants were not appointed on the 1st of Vrischigam, and so the amount was reduced to Rs. 100, if I remember right.